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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Department of Agricultural Resources

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June 8, 2007

2007 Massachusetts Agricultural Marketing Grants Awarded

BOSTON – The Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR) today announced the award of \$150,000 in Agricultural Marketing Grants to 20 organizations for projects that promote the Commonwealth's agricultural industry from Southeastern Massachusetts to the Berkshires. Grant recipients were selected from 40 proposals totaling over \$1 million submitted last month.

"The department requested proposals for projects in March, and the response from agricultural organizations and other groups was overwhelming," DAR Acting Commissioner Scott Soares said. "From creating web sites and promoting farmers' markets near mass transit to promoting a cheese and wine contest, the proposals we're funding represent a wide array of projects that will go a long way toward expanding markets for the Commonwealth's agricultural industry. Funded through the Massachusetts Agricultural Innovation Center, these grants are another example of the state's recent efforts to enhance economic development opportunities for farmers."

In selecting awardees, DAR looked for projects that met at least one of the following criteria: promotes Massachusetts agriculture; educates consumers about Massachusetts agriculture or products; increases the economic potential of the state's farming industry; or offers technical marketing assistance to one or more agricultural entities. The department gave special consideration to proposals aimed at contributing to the development of new or alternative agricultural products or pursuits, increasing opportunities for direct sales, and enhancing opportunities for farmer and public participation in Massachusetts agricultural fairs.

The largest grant goes to the University of Massachusetts–Amherst, which will receive \$49,943 to promote ethnic crops produced by the Pioneer Valley Grower's Association. The department also awarded \$23,900 to the Mass Woodlands Cooperative in South Deerfield to promote locally grown Forest Stewardship Council "green"-certified products and educate the public about buying local and building with sustainably harvested wood. In Eastern Massachusetts, the largest grant goes to the Bristol County Conservation District in Westport to fund Phase I of a program to help Massachusetts dairy farms transition to partial or full value-added production.

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Other grants include:

\$7,750 – Boston Public Market Association, Boston, in cooperation with the Federation of Massachusetts Farmers' Markets in Waltham for development of a "Transit-Oriented Markets" promotional campaign. This project will promote 49 farmers' markets located near MBTA stops. The MBTA grid will be adapted to highlight stops in proximity to farmers' markets and to promote web sites where markets' hours and locations can be found. Posters and produce bags with this information will be developed. Temporary directional signage for markets will lead consumers from public transit stops to nearby farmers' markets.

\$1,425 – Catamount Farmers' Market, Shelburne Falls to develop and print the Catamount Farmers' Market recipe book.

\$7,000 – Eastern States Exposition, Springfield to assist in promoting of an artisan cheese and wine contest featuring Massachusetts products.

\$3,000 – Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, Greenfield to help promote two featured events – Fiber Twist and Cider Day – via the Internet and advertising materials.

\$2,000 – Great Barrington Farmers' Market, Great Barrington to create a web site to promote the market.

\$3,175 – Groundwork Lawrence, Lawrence for outreach to restaurants to encourage them to shop at the Lawrence Downtown Farmers' market, and outreach to the public through English and Spanish radio advertisements.

\$750 – Hatfield Agricultural Fair and Harvest Festival, Hatfield to assist in the start up of a new agricultural event in Hatfield.

\$4,875 – Massachusetts Farm Wineries and Growers Association, Lincoln to support the development of a web site and educational vignettes to inform consumers about the growing, production and availability of Massachusetts fruit and grape wines.

\$1,600 – Massachusetts Maple Producers Association, Ashfield to fund a maple sugaring educational project for quality control and best management practices.

\$5,900 – New England Apple Association, Hatfield to produce "Image of Apples," which will supply a wide range of professional graphics for the Association's print and electronic promotions, including the Internet; create an archive of Massachusetts orchards and New England varieties; and become a reliable source of free, high-quality images of apples and orchards for farms, educational organizations and the general public.

\$5,000 – Northeast Organic Farming Association, Barre to produce a local dairy product guide featuring organic and non-organic milk and value-added dairy products.

\$1,750 – Plymouth Farmers' Market, Plymouth to develop a web site for the Plymouth Farmers' Market.

\$2,750 - Quincy 2000 Collaborative, Quincy, on behalf of the Quincy Farmers' Market, to develop a website for the Quincy Farmers' Market.

\$5,750 – Revere Beach Partnership, Revere, on behalf of the Revere Beach Farmers' Market, for farmers' market banners, flyers, and postcards, and to work with high school students to produce a farmers' market video to be broadcast on local cable TV.

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\$5,180 – Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership, Wareham to develop an online mapping tool that will store information about existing farm delivery routes so that buyers (and nearby farmers) can search for existing routes near them by day of week and time of day. Buyers will be able to find out which farms are already delivering nearby and farmers will be able to maximize their sales per route. This will result in accurate, intuitive and valuable information for rebuilding local business-to-business distribution routes.

\$2,000 – The Thanksgiving Harvest Festival at Red Apple Farm, Phillipston to promote the collective effort by farmers and locally-owned businesses featured in the Thanksgiving Harvest Festival through radio advertising.

\$4,000 – UMass Cold Spring Orchard, Belchertown to develop a consumer survey of new apple varieties. This will include sampling apples, analysis, and producing report findings, along with a booklet listing nurseries where trees can be purchased.

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